

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An expression construct, which comprises ~~the~~ a nucleic acid sequence coding for a shuttle peptide construct which is processable by yeast cells, has the formula

(Sig-SP),

and comprises in 5'-3' orientation the nucleic acid sequences coding for

- a) a signal peptide (Sig) processably linked to
- b) at least one shuttle peptide (SP) secretable by said yeast cells.

2. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shuttle peptide construct (Sig-SP) is derived from polypeptide processed by yeasts of the genus *Schizosaccharomyces*, ~~in particular by *S. pombe*.~~

3. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in ~~either of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the shuttle peptide construct (Sig-SP) is derived from a pheromone pre-protein of a yeast, said pheromone (Pher) being derivable from the pre-protein and secretable by N- and C-terminal processing.

4. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in claim 3, wherein the signal polypeptide (Sig) is the proteolytically removable native signal polypeptide of the pheromone pre-protein.

5. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in claim 4, wherein the C-terminally processed pheromone (Pher) ~~encompasses~~ comprises a C-terminal protease cleavage site.

6. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, ~~furthermore~~ further comprising ~~the~~ a nucleic acid sequence coding for a homologous or heterologous target protein (Targ) processably linked to the C-terminus of the shuttle peptide construct (Sig-SP).

7. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims, encompassing the~~ claim 1 comprising a nucleic acid sequence coding for a fusion protein which is processable by yeast cells and has the formula

$$\text{Sig-L1}_n\text{-Pher-L2}_m\text{-Targ}$$

in which

Sig is signal polypeptide, Pher is processed pheromone, and Targ are as defined above is target protein,

L1 and L2 are processable linkers and

n and m are independently of one another, and is 0 or 1.

8. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid sequence coding for the shuttle peptide construct (Sig-SP) ~~encompasses~~ comprises a signal polypeptide-coding sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 3 or a functional equivalent thereof which is operatively linked to the nucleic acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 5, coding for a mature pheromone protein (P factor), or to a functional equivalent thereof.

9. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid sequence coding for the shuttle peptide construct ~~encompasses~~ comprises a sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 1, optionally extended at the 3' end, ~~where appropriate,~~ by the sequence coding for a target protein (Targ).

10. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 6, wherein the target protein is a hydrophobin, in particular a class I hydrophobin.

11. (Currently amended) ~~An~~ The expression construct as claimed in claim 10, wherein the hydrophobin is selected from ~~among the group consisting of~~ SEQ ID NO: 14 (DewA), SEQ ID NO: 19 (RdIA), SEQ ID NO: 20 (RdIB), SEQ ID NO: 21 (HYP1) and SEQ ID NO: 22 (HYP4), or is encoded by a nucleic acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 13.

12. (Currently amended) An expression vector, ~~encompassing an~~ comprising the expression construct as claimed in ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 which is operatively linked to at least one regulatory nucleic acid sequence.
13. (Currently amended) A recombinant microorganism, comprising at least one ~~expression vector as claimed in claim 12 or an~~ expression construct as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 11,~~ where appropriate claim 1 stably integrated into the host genome.
14. (Currently amended) ~~Microorganism~~ The microorganism as claimed in claim 13, selected from among yeasts.
15. (Currently amended) A The microorganism as claimed in claim 14, selected from among yeasts of the genus Schizosaccharomyces, ~~in particular S. pombe.~~
16. (Currently amended) A shuttle peptide construct (~~Sig-SP~~), processable by yeast cells and derived from a pheromone pre-protein of a yeast, wherein the pheromone is derivable from said pre-protein and secretable by N- and C-terminal processing.
17. (Currently amended) A The shuttle peptide construct as claimed in claim 16, comprising a signal polypeptide N-terminally processably linked to the C-terminally processed pheromone polypeptide.
18. (Currently amended) A The shuttle peptide construct as claimed in claim 17, wherein the signal polypeptide is the proteolytically removable native signal polypeptide of the pheromone pre-protein.
19. (Currently amended) A The shuttle peptide construct as claimed in claim 17, wherein the C-terminally processed pheromone polypeptide ~~encompasses~~ comprises the C-terminal protease cleavage site.
20. (Currently amended) A The shuttle peptide construct as claimed in ~~any of claims 16 to 19, encompassing claim 16 comprising~~ an amino acid sequence as defined in SEQ ID NO: 2 or a functional equivalent thereof.
21. (Currently amended) A method for recombinant preparation of a target protein, which comprises culturing a the microorganism as claimed in ~~any of claims 13 to 15~~ claim 13,

expressing the nucleic acid sequence encoding said target protein and isolating the target protein secreted into the culture medium.

22. (Currently amended) A ~~The~~ method as claimed in claim 21, wherein the target protein is a hydrophobin ~~as defined in claim 10 or 11~~.

23. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid, coding for a ~~the~~ shuttle peptide construct as claimed in ~~any of claims 16 to 20~~ claim 16.

24. (Currently amended) A nucleic acid ~~as defined in any of claims 1 to 11~~ coding for the expression construct as claimed in claim 1.

25. (Currently amended) A hydrophobin, ~~obtainable~~ obtained by a ~~the~~ method as claimed in claim 22.

26-28. (Canceled)

29. (New) A method of treating the surface of an object comprising obtaining a hydrophobin by the method according to claim 22, and treating the surface of the object with the hydrophobin.

30. (New) The method according to claim 29, wherein the object is selected from the group consisting of glass, fibers, fabrics, leather, painted objects, films and facades.

31. (New) A method of treating the surface of fibers, fabrics and leather, wherein the method comprises obtaining a class I hydrophobin or a hydrophobin as defined in claim 11, and treating the surface of the fibers, fabrics and leather with the hydrophobin.

32. (New) The expression construct of claim 2, wherein the yeast is *S. pombe*.

33. (New) The microorganism of claim 15, wherein the yeast is *S. pombe*.